

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KHARTO 02508 281207Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O P 281130Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 589

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIMNITY

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 2508

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SU, ET, US

SUBJECT: KAGNEW FOUR:BRIEFING OF GOS

REF: STATE 253190 (NOTAL)

1. IN ACCORDANCE REFTEL, I BRIEFED MINSTATE KIBEIDA OCT 28 RE OUR CONTACT WITH ELF REP OCT 22. KIBEIDA EXPRESSED APPRECIATION AND ASKED WHETHER DIALOGUE WOULD BE CONTINUED. I REPLIED WE HAD SO FAR RECEIVED NO FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS BUT THAT, IN PRINCIPAL, WE WISHED DEVELOP ANY CHANNEL WHICH MIGHT HELP FREE OUR FOUR CITIZENS WITHOUT CONDITIONS. ON PERSONAL BASIS, I THEN SAID THAT, AS RESULT OCT 22 CONTACT, ELF NOW KNOWS OUR FIRM POSITION DIRECTLY. IT SHOULD BE OBVIOUS TO THEM THAT CONTINUED DETENTION HOSTAGES HARDLY LIKELY HELP ERITREAN CAUSE. SOME NEW GOS EFFORT INDUCE ELF TO SEE REASON MIGHT THUS NOW BE MOST TIMELY. KIBEIDA RESPONDED THAT SUDANESE HAVE LIMITED INFLUENCE OVER ERITREANS AND THAT GOS WAS WORRIED LEST EPMG BECOME CONCERNED AT SUDANESE ROLE. I REPLIED THAT WE WERE OF COURSE KEEPING EPMG GENERALLY INFORMED OF PROGRESS IN CASE, INCLUDING OUR OCT 22 CONTACT. FAR FROM EXPRESSING CONCERN, ETHIOPIAN OFFICIALS HAD EITHER RAISED NO OBJECTION

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PAGE 02 KHARTO 02508 281207Z

OR EXPRESSED UNDERSTANDING OF OUR EFFORTS (ADDIS 12602;

ASMARA 0903). EARLY RESOLUTION OF THE CASE ON BASIS UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES WOULD IN FACT APPEAR IN GENRAL INTEREST ALL PARTIES. KIBEIDA INDICATED HE WOULD EIE WHAT FURTHER MIGHT BE DONE IN TERMS CONTACTING ELF.

2. NOTING TO KIBEIDA THAT ELF REP HAD TOLD US HE HOPED OUR DISCUSSIONS COULD REMAIN SECRET, I SAID WE UNDERSTOOD REPRESENTATIVE HAD IN FACT BRIEFED REUTERS CORRESPONDENT. EARLY PUBLICITY THUS APPEARED QUITE LIKELY. IF WE ARE ASKED ABOUT IT, WE WILL SIMPLY CONFIRM FACT OF MEETING AND WILL DENY, IF ASKED, THAT ANY NEGOTIATIONS INVOLVED. KIBEIDA RAISED NO OBJECTION BUT INDICATED HE HOPED STORY WOULD NOT SURFACE.

3. REMINDING KIBEIDA EMBASSY STILL HOLDING FOOD AND MEDICINE FOR CISCO TWO, I ASKED WHETHER ANY USEFUL GOS CONTACT WITH PLF HAD YET BEEN ESTABLISHED. KIBEIDA SAID HE THOUGHT NOT BUT PROMISED INVESTIGATE. I REMINDED HIM WE WERE KEENLY INTERESTED IN EXPEDITING THESE PARCELS FOR HUMANITARIAN REASONS. SHOULD QUESTION ARISE, WE WOULD ALSO BE PREPARED RESPOND TO ANY PLF DESIRE FOR MEETING AS WE HAD WITH ELF.

BREWER

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